

the drawn and undrawn synthetic fibers using a profiled calendar rolls (sic) to bond the fibrous web." However, Nakamura et al. states that "the raw materials of the filter medium 13 ... are mixed with the thermally meltable, thermoplastic fibers ... and the mixture is formed into the filter medium 13. The filter medium 14 is overlaid over the filter medium 13 and pressed against it while being heated so that the thermally meltable ... fibers in the filter medium 13 are melted to bond the filter media 13 and 14 together." (col. 4, lines 35-44). Thus, it is clear in Nakamura that the filter layer is formed as a non-woven fabric prior to any bonding step using the undrawn synthetic fibers, and that the fibrous web of drawn and undrawn synthetic fibers which form the layer 13 cannot be formed into a non-woven fabric by bonding between calendar rolls, because such a step would melt the undrawn synthetic fibers before the step of bonding layers 13 and 14 together. Thus, in Nakamura et al., the layer 13 of drawn and undrawn synthetic fibers must be formed into a non-woven fabric in some other manner, which would prevent the undrawn synthetic fibers from melting before they are overlaid by the layer 14 and subsequently bonded. Therefore, Nakamura et al. teaches away from the step in claim 1 wherein the fibrous web is bonded between calendar rolls, and the examiner's modification of Nakamura et al. to include a calendaring step is improper as a matter of law. Neither Shinjou et al. or Schultheiss et al. can overcome these deficiencies in Nakamura et al., as any bonding step using heat would destroy in Nakamura et al. any subsequent bonding between the layers 13 and 14. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-4 is therefore respectfully requested.

The examiner has asserted that Norton would make obvious calendaring the filter material of Nakamura et al. between corrugated calendar rolls. For the reasons set forth above, Nakamura et al. teaches away from a calendaring step as suggested by the examiner. Furthermore, Norton describes a process wherein a filter material is impregnated with a resin, and wherein the calendaring rolls are treated with a resin-

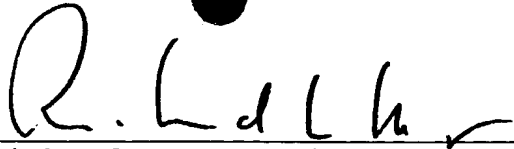
solvent vapor. It is respectfully submitted that the process of Norton, which uses an injected resin material and calendar rolls which are modified so as to be usable with a resin-impregnated material are inapplicable to the teachings of Nakamura et al., in which no resins are used and in which there is no calendared bonding of fibers to form a non-woven fabric. Furthermore, neither Nakamura et al. or Norton provide any teaching, suggestion, or motivation to make the modification as suggested by the examiner. Instead, the modification is suggested only by hindsight gleaned by the examiner from applicant's invention. The examiner's combination of Nakamura et al. and Norton is therefore erroneous as a matter of law and must be withdrawn.

With regard to claims 2-4, the examiner asserts that the "teachings of the art of record" would make obvious the three alternative techniques set forth in those claims, yet provides no evidence that any of the cited art disclose the steps in claims 2-4. It is respectfully submitted that none of the prior art of record show the steps of any of claims 2-4, and the examiner is respectfully requested to specifically set forth in which reference, and at what location, these steps are shown. Absent such a showing, the examiner's rejection fails to present a prima facie case of obviousness of claims 2-4, and therefore the examiner's rejection of those claims is deficient as a matter of law. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2-4 is therefore respectfully requested.

For each of the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims are in condition for allowance. Early notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

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2. (once amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:
preheating the fibrous web and then guiding the fibrous web between heated calender rolls.

3. (once amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:
preheating the fibrous web and then guiding the fibrous web between cooled calender rolls.

4. (once amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:
guiding the fibrous web, unheated, between heated calender rolls.